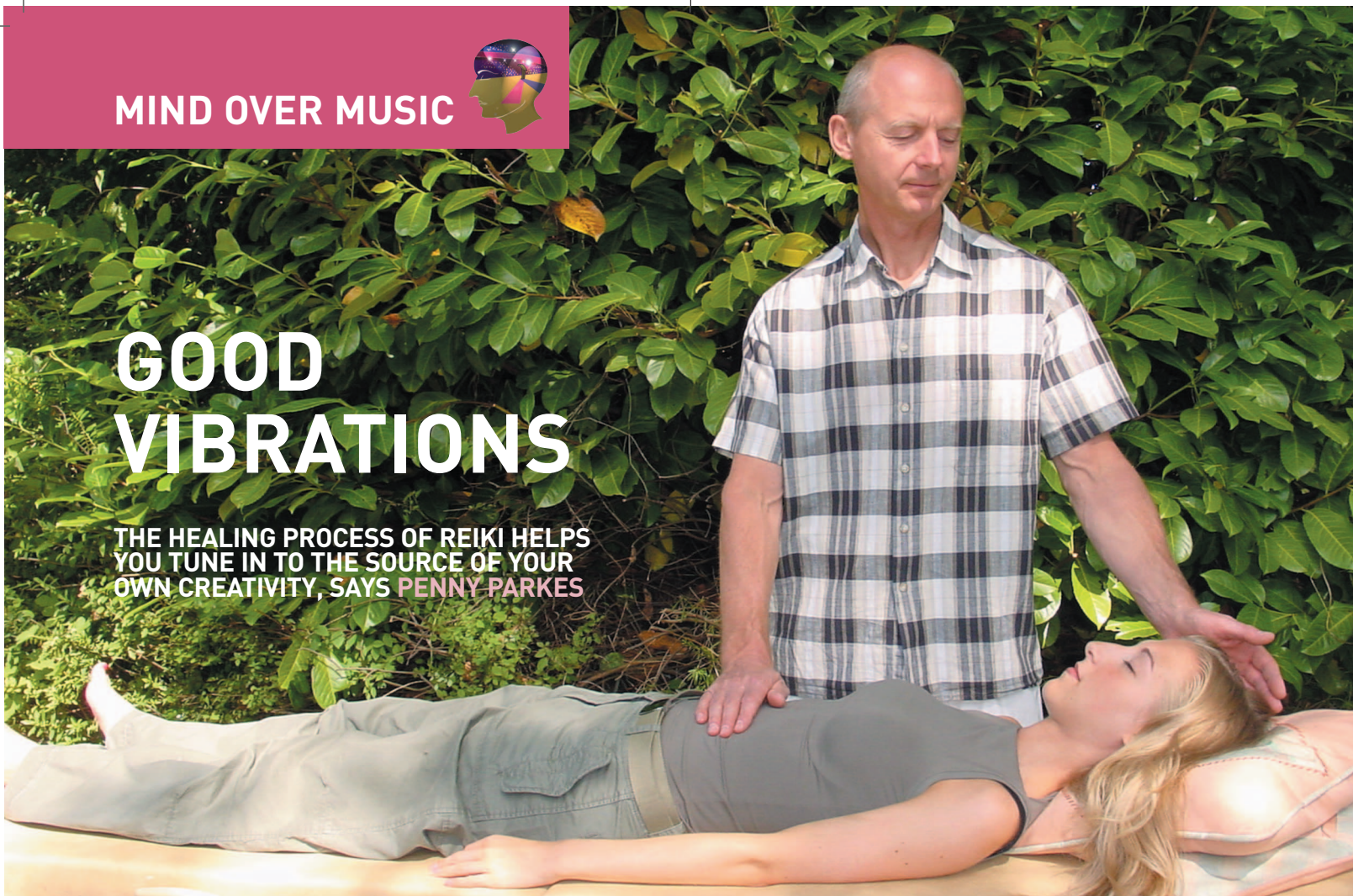


MIND OVER MUSIC



GOOD VIBRATIONS

THE HEALING PROCESS OF REIKI HELPS YOU TUNE IN TO THE SOURCE OF YOUR OWN CREATIVITY, SAYS PENNY PARKES



Since biblical times, the laying of hands on the body has been a means both of healing and investing power in people. Reiki, developed in Japan in the early 1900s, is an extension of those ancient principles.

The popularity of reiki has spread throughout the world mainly because it is a gentle, non-invasive way of keeping healthy and staying relaxed. While treatments can bring about relief from pain and other symptoms, one of its greatest benefits is that it is easy for anyone to learn.

Most complementary therapies can take months or even years to master but the basics of reiki can be passed on in just two days. After that you can treat yourself instead of having to visit a practitioner, enabling you to take charge of your own health and well-being.

One difference between reiki and other body-centred treatments is that reiki courses are almost entirely experiential; there are no books to read or tests to take. 'Attunements' are at the heart of this healing art and are key to the process – they are the catalyst for the amplification of life-force energy.

Reiki is passed from teacher to student by a series of attunements carried out during a training course. These help each person receive an increased amount of life-force energy, which can then be used for self-healing or healing others.

Musicians can benefit from reiki in a number of ways. Because all you need are your hands, it can be used anywhere and at any time. It calms the nervous system and is a natural antidote to stress. It relieves physical symptoms and works towards alleviating their cause.

Many musicians find reiki invaluable for treating repetitive strain injuries – especially carpal tunnel syndrome, which affects the wrists, hands and sometimes the lower arms too.

Singer, songwriter and healer Carole Isis from Manchester uses reiki to heal throat ailments and help with relaxation before a performance. After a brief self-treatment, Isis describes feeling more confident and in control.

Kathryn Mannyng of Minnesota in the USA is a classically trained soprano, self-taught harpist and a reiki practitioner. She believes that music from an attuned musician is especially healing because energy moves along sound waves to reach the listener, bathing the body in sound.

Mannyng has also found that reiki has helped her to connect more sensitively with other musicians, which is especially helpful for listening and ensemble work. She believes reiki helps the performer handle the stress, rejection and anxiety so often experienced

but points out that nothing can replace planning and practice before a performance.

Kingston-upon-Thames resident Louise Smith (not her real name) had suffered from depression for several years. Smith's condition prevented her practising and enjoying the piano, which had previously given her much joy. Fortunately, a friend recommended she have treatment from Glenda Parkinson, a classical pianist and reiki master. Following the first treatment, Smith noticed a marked improvement in her condition. After some time, friends noticed that she looked radiant with happiness.

Smith went on to take all three levels of reiki training with Parkinson over the next 12 months. After a year of practising on herself and others, she felt confident enough to begin playing the piano again. Smith acknowledges that reiki played a significant part in the healing process: 'Each level helped me to meet the challenges in my life with a more positive outlook and gave me the tools to do this effectively.'

With Parkinson's encouragement, Smith found joy through music once again and returned to wholeness and happiness. She now looks forward to the future, adding that 'with the help of reiki, I can do anything I want to do'.

靈氣

Parkinson believes reiki offers a number of benefits to classical musicians. The first is stress management. Reiki's calming effect can help produce a relaxed yet alert state of mind, necessary for optimum results. Other benefits include pain relief, useful for aches arising after long hours of practice. Reiki is also a beneficial first aid tool, which can be invaluable in the event of accidental injury before a performance.

Parkinson learned reiki with Chris Parkes who, as co-founder of Manchester's Reiki School, has taught a number of musicians.

'As well as helping with stress and injuries,' Parkes points out, 'reiki enables musicians

to become increasingly expressive, better able to communicate the rhythmic energy and power of music to listeners.'

The use of reiki offers a multitude of benefits to the musician. It helps bring about vibrant health, inner balance and increased sensitivity to vibration. As Kathryn Mannyng points out, reiki can't get you an audition and it doesn't remove the need for other therapies at times – but it speeds up healing and raises your awareness so you can tune in to the very source of your creativity. ■

Penny Parkes is the co-principal and co-founder of Manchester's Reiki School

MIND OVER MUSIC

Kathryn Mannyng claims reiki has helped her connect more sensitively with other musicians



REIKI – THE VITAL STATISTICS

THE HISTORY

Dr Mikao Usui, the founder of reiki, was born in Japan in 1865. After graduating, he joined a Buddhist group and spent much time studying Japanese and Chinese healing arts. While he was seriously ill with cholera, Usui had a vision of the Buddha who told him he had a special destiny to create a healing system that would benefit all of mankind. When he recovered, Usui began researching the way in which the Buddha had healed.

He came across some ancient Buddhist texts said to originate from Tibet. Usui went on a meditative 21-day retreat to a local holy mountain where he saw lights moving across the sky towards him at great speed. They seemed to hit his forehead, after which he began to see images of strange symbols. He recognised the symbols from the Tibetan manuscripts. With each symbol, information was imparted to him. Usui returned to Kyoto determined to find a way of developing this information into an accessible healing system and went on to create what we know today as reiki.

Usui later opened several clinics and taught many people how to practise. It was through one of his students, Dr Chujiro Hayashi, that reiki came to the West. Dr Hayashi taught reiki to a Japanese-American called Mrs Takata who, before she died in 1979, initiated 22 people as reiki teachers or 'masters'. Through these initiates, reiki has spread throughout Europe and the USA.

FINDING A PRACTITIONER

Personal recommendation is ideal. Alternatively, contact an organisation such as the International Guild of Professional Practitioners (www.igpp.co.uk), whose

members meet common standards and are covered by insurance. Well-established centres such as Violet Hill Studios in London have experienced practitioners. The Reiki Association and The Reiki Federation can both supply details of UK practitioners.

Ideally, reiki classes should have no more than 12 participants and you should expect to receive personal attention plus support afterwards. It may be worth travelling further for a particular class that attracts you. The most convenient way is often to set up your own class and invite a reiki master to teach you.

Most complementary therapy centres offer reiki treatments as do fitness centres and holistic beauty therapy salons.

WHAT IT COSTS

Prices vary and depend on the experience and qualifications of the practitioner but treatments often equate to the local cost of a body massage. Reductions are often offered for a series of treatments and concessions are usually available to those who are financially disadvantaged.

CONTACTS AND COURSES

For a list of UK reiki practitioners, send an SAE to: Jean Jones, The Reiki Association, 1 Craigmyle Gardens, Clovenford TD1 3LP

Reiki Federation

PO Box 1785, Andover SP11 0WB
Tel: 01264 773774
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The Reiki School, Budworth, Shay Lane, Hale, Altrincham WA15 8UE

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Violet Hill Studios, 6 Violet Hill, St Johns Wood, London NW8 9EB

Tel: 020 7624 6101 Fax: 020 7372 2767
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International Association of Reiki Professionals, PO Box 104, Harrisville NH 03450

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Web: www.iarp.org

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Web: www.reikialliance.com

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